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A
S E R M O N
Preach'd at the
CONSECRATION
O F T H E
Chapel of *Stockton*,
I N T H E
Diocese, and County-Palatine
of *D U R H A M*,
August 21. 1712.

By *J O H N S M I T H*, D. D.
and Prebendary of *Durham*.

Publish'd at the Request of the Corporation.

L O N D O N :

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SERMON

Preached at the

CONSECRATION

OF THE

Chapel of St. John

IN THE

Diocese and County of London

OF DUBLIN

By the Rev. J. J. J.

TO THE



Printed by J. J. J.

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1811

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To the Right Worshipful

The Mayor, Recorder,
and Aldermen; with the Rest
of the Inhabitants of the Ancient
Corporation of Stockton.

Gentlemen and Neighbours,

HAVING been Commanded by my Lord of
Durham to Preach the Sermon at His
Consecration of Your Chapel, and Intreated by
You to Publish it; I gladly paid my Duty to
His Lordship, and I cannot be wanting in my
Respects to You upon so Good an Occasion.

Such an Instance of Religion as You have
given, Deserves indeed All the Respects that
can be shewn it; and as it had them from His
Lordship in a most Eminent Manner, so 'tis but
meet it should have them from us All as Oppor-
tunity is offer'd.

It was a Beautiful Sight to Behold That Day
Happy a Concord betwixt a Bishop and His
Flock in their Respective Offices. His Affecti-
onate Readiness to come to You, and the Cheer-

DEDICATION.

ful Duty wherewith You Received him ; His Orderly Disposal of the Solemnity, and Your Exact Observance of it ; The Gravity and Vigour wherewith He went through His Function, and the Reverence and Devotion wherewith You Attended it : These were Things which spread Satisfaction into All Hearts, and sent them home Far and Near with Joy.

And now that the Service is past, I hope the Blessings of Your Diocesan upon Your Church will remain, and be found upon Your Persons, and upon Your Families, and upon All that You put Your Hands unto ; And that Your Corporation will go on to Flourish and Increase, till Your Church be Again too Little for You.

I am, with All Imaginable Sincerity,

Gentlemen and Neighbours,

Your most Assured Friend,

and Humble Servant,

JOHN SMITH.

I
I. What Relation has this House to Christ
Coming to his Temple?
MATTH. XXI. 19.

-----*Hosanna to the Son of David.*

THIS is the Voice with which our Saviour was receiv'd into his Temple at Jerusalem; and wherever there is a Temple prepared for him, the same is the Voice of his Reception into it. It expresses all the Affections of devout Minds, going forth to meet their Lord, and conduct him to the Possession of his House among them; all that Piety which you of this Place are now shewing him, in the Person of his Apostle, of your Bishop, who comes to you in Christ's Name, to accept this House which you have made, and to dedicate it to his Presence.

This Great Assembly, this Multitude of Disciples, what speaks it, but a Welcome to Jesus, *Hosanna to the Son of David.*

In this Acclamation we shall have to consider these Three Things.

- I. What Relation it has to Christ's Coming to his Temple.
- II. What Affections it expresses to him thereupon,
- III. What Grounds it has for Them.

I. What Relation has this *Hosanna* to Christ's Coming to his Temple ?

1. To his Temple in *Jerusalem*.
2. To the Dedication of it.
3. To the Christian Temples, as well as to that of the *Jews*.

I. What Relation has this *Hosanna* to Christ's Coming to his Temple in *Jerusalem* ? It usually passes for an Attendant upon his Entry into the City ; but the Temple was indeed the Place that Christ came to ; Thither it was He went directly, *v. 12.* and thither the *Hosanna* followed him, *v. 15.* and having there done its Duty, He declares the Praise perfected ; and we hear no more of it after in any other Part of the City.

For the Original of this Service we must have recourse to the CXVIIIth *Psalms*, which is the Scripture from whence the *Hosanna* is taken, and which the *Jews* in the Times of the latter Temple us'd to sing upon their great Festivals, in Prospect of the *Messiah's* Coming at some of them. It represents him as proceeding in State to the Temple, and at his Approach, calling to the Ministers of it, *Open me the Gates of Righteousness, I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord.* To this the People, if it were meeting him, make Answer, *This is the Gate of the Lord, the Righteous shall enter into it.* And then after several Alternate Raptures of *Psalms* They break forth into the Words of my Text, *25. Save now we beseech thee, O Lord,* which is the *English* of *Hosanna* ; *Blessed be he that cometh in the Name of the Lord,* which is the Descant upon

And then as if they had Finished the Salutation without Doors, They add, *We have blessed you out of the House of the Lord.* And so carrying him into the Temple with it, They go on, *God is the Lord who hath shewed us Light, Bind the Sacrifice with Cords, even unto the Horns of the Altar.* Thus the *Hosanna* went out of the Temple and came into it many a Time before it met with Christ, till at last he came, and found it in his Service.

2. This Acclamation has not only a Reference to the Temple and Christ's Coming to it, but to his Coming upon a special Occasion, The *Dedication*, the *Consecration* of it. The *Jewish* Temple had been several times dedicated; by *Solomon*, by *Ezra*, by the *Maccabees*; but of the Last Time, there was a Memorial kept in our Saviour's Age, and Honoured with his Presence. Now of This it is Remarkable, That the Celebration consisted in the Carrying of Branches, and Palms, and singing *Hosanna* into the Temple, the very same Solemnity that the People used to Christ, upon the Occasion we have before us. And tho I would not strictly infer from hence, that our Saviour came at This Time to the Literal Dedication of the Temple, yet I cannot but recommend to your Observation, the strange Congruity which This Coming of his bears to it, when we consider these following Things.

1. That the Solemnity of the latter Temple's Dedication was never finish'd, nor suppos'd to be so, but in the Coming of the *Messiah* to it.

2. That it was never finish'd in any other Coming of our Saviour to it, till This of the Text.

3. That it was Finish'd in this.

1. The

1. The Solemnity of the latter Temple's Dedication was never finish'd, nor supposed to be so, but in the Coming of the *Messiah* to it. 'Tis agreed on All Hands, That the Dedication of a Temple among the *Jews*, was to be compleated by the Manifestation of the Divine Glory, to Notify God's Acceptance of it. This was visibly done to the First Temple, but never to the Other. To comfort them under This Want, they had the Promise of God, that he would fill *That House also with Glory*, and to that End, the *Desire of All Nations should come; the Lord whom they sought* should come to his Temple, and his Coming should be *suddenly*. Where there is a manifest Suspension of the Dedication's Solemnity till Christ's Coming, and yet a Connexion with it; so that though his Coming was not till Many Years after, yet in the Eye of Prophecy and of Faith, 'twas as it were Immediate.

2. The Dedication of the Temple was never finish'd in any other Coming of our Saviour to it till this of the Text. When he was first Presented in the Temple, *Simeon* saw his Glory, and spake of him, and so did *Anna*, but it was All in the Spirit; as to any thing that could be outwardly seen of him, He came as a Common Infant. Every Year at every Feast he went up to the Temple, and there taught, and did Miracles, but still his Coming to it was Private; the Manifestation of his Glory was not risen to that Maturity upon which He might take upon him an Appearance to the World till now. When his Friends would have had him go up to the Dedication, but Three Months before, and shew himself, He told them, His Time was not yet come; and therefore tho he did go up afterwards, yet it was still but secretly, as if he had

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design'd to put off all the Glory of the Dedication to This Time of the Passover.

3. 'Twas in This Coming of Christ to his Last Passover, that he displayed That Fulness of Glory, by which the Dedication of the Temple was to be finished. The Perfection and Crown of the Dedication Solemnity were the Sacrifices in the Oblation, of which the Glory of God Actually descended to the First Temple, and was expected in the Latter. At This Passover then our Saviour being to Perfect his Messiahship, by the Sacrifice of his Death and Passion, and to compleat the Glory of it by his Resurrection, took upon him an Unusual Pomp, that All might see, and take Notice of him in it; that they might behold here the Great, the only Sacrifice coming to the Temple, by which God design'd to manifest himself, for the sanctifying of his House, to an Eternal Celebration of That Pure Offering. In order to That, observe how he comes to it in All the Forms of a Dedication. Besides the Branches, the Palms, and the *Hosanna's*, He makes here a Legal Entrance, He takes Possession by driving out All other Pretenders, He purges and cleanses it from whatever is Profane; then He receives the House, and Calls it his own, then he admits All Nations to him in it, and declares the Hour come, that the Son of Man should be Glorified: And accordingly calling to his Father, to Glorify his Name, there came a Voice from Heaven, like unto Thunder, or the speaking of an Angel, the Ancient Manifestations of the Divine Glory. All this was done upon This Coming to the Temple, where it was Dedicated with such an Appearance of the Heavenly Majesty, that even *Solomon's* in All his Glory was not arrayed like it. So near a Relation has This *Hosanna* to the Dedication of the Temple among the *Jews*.

It only remains to consider, 3dly, What Relation it has to our Christian Temples, and to the Dedication of Them?

If the *Jews* had been True to their *Hosanna's* and to the Purpose of God in them, Their Temple after it had been Consecrated in the Blood of Christ and Filled with the Glory of his Dwelling Presence upon his Exaltation from the Grave to Heaven would it self have passed into the First Christian Church. Our Saviour when he here took Possession of it plainly dedicated it to Christian Offices *My House shall be a House of Prayer to All People* and as such his Disciples used it till they were driven out of it. When our Lord instituted his Supper, he did it in the same House wherein he eat the Passover: The same *Hosanna* which brought him into the Temple, brought him into the Church concluded the *Jewish* and begun the Christian Sacrifice. Whilst the Apostles were forced to perform the Worship of Christ in Private, they did it in the same Upper Rooms, that the Religious *Jews* in their several Dispersions made use of for their Prayers. So soon as Christianity could have the Liberty of Churches, the Cathedrals succeeded the Temple, and the Parish Churches and Chapels succeeded the Synagogues and Oratories of *Jews*. And thus the Acclamation of my Text hath spread self from the Temple of *Jerusalem* through the whole World, and has the same Use to Day in this Place, that it had in the Day of its First Beginning To bring Christ now to his Churches, as it did then to his Temple. And This is the Relation it has to his coming to it.

Let us consider in the next Place,

II. What *Affections* This *Hosanna* expresses Christ upon his Coming to his Temple. I shall mention only these,

I. Faith

1. Faith. 2. Joy. 3. Desire.

1. It is an Expression of your *Faith*. What the People believed of Christ in the *Hosanna* of the Text, we may easily gather from the Title they gave him, *The Son of David*. And if he had come to the Royal Palace, to the House of *David*, it might have been enough to believe that he was *David's Son*; But when he comes to the Temple, to the House of God, That shews him to be the Son of another Father, and requires a Faith of a higher Nature. Hence we may observe, That the main Scope of all our Saviour's Discourses in the Temple, was to claim the God of it for his Father. At the very Beginning of his Preaching, he assumed there the same Authority of a Son, which he used now at his Last Coming; and upon the same Title, that it was his *Father's House*, Joh. II. 16. When he was there at the Dedication of it, and they peremptorily Demanded to know who he was, he told them plainly, He was the *Son of God*, John X. 36. And when notwithstanding All This, they brought him here again into the Temple, as *the Son of David*, observing how Defective their *Hosanna's* were in This Point, he took Occasion to examine their Faith, and to Ask them, *Whose Son* they thought Christ to be; and when they answered according to the Tenor of their *Hosanna's*, *The Son of David*, He saith unto them, *How then doth David in Spirit call him Lord? If David call him Lord, How is He his Son?* Matth. XXII. 45.

I am afraid there are a great many *Hosanna's* that want to be examined in This Particular, that go along with the Multitude to the Temple, and yet allow Christ to be nothing, but the Son of *David*, the Offspring of the Prince, the Child of Temporal Power. If these would be govern'd by our Sa-

viour's Argument, and submit themselves to the Determination of the Prince, We are blest with one over Us, whose Faith and whose Example, as well as *David's*, would soon resolve This Question. Ask your Sovereign whose Son Christ is? In the Flesh indeed he came of *David*, and she makes him her own, the Son of her Bosom, and never was there such a Nursing Mother; but in the Spirit, as *David* called him, so she owns him for her Lord, and never was there a more Devoted Servant.

He is not then the Son of the Prince; neither is he the Son of the *People*. All this Equipage and Throng of your *Hosanna*, makes him not the Product of your Wealth, or of your Numbers, but acknowledges him for the Lord of your Adorations. The Outward Splendor of Christ in the World, is owing to the Authority of Princes, to the Good Will of their Subjects; but Christ Himself, his Spiritual Existence, is the necessary Object of their Obedience and Duty. The mighty Inclination that appears in This Kingdom, both in the Prince, and in the Subject, to make Temples for Christ, is most highly Commendable in it self and Glorious to Him: But after all, your Prince is ready, both for Her self and You, to take up the Words of *David*, *Who am I? And what is my People? that we should be Able to offer so willingly after this sort; for all Things come of Thee, and of thine own have we given thee*, 2 Chron. XXIX. 14. *David* then may be heard in This Case, Christ is not His Son, nor his People's; All must be forced to agree thus far in their Faith, That he is the Son of God.

The only Question is, How far That Title will imply his Divinity? What the *Jews* gathered from his Claiming it, is very Evident, that he made

himself God, John X. 33. But to put it out of all Doubt, He told them clearly, *I and my Father are One*, v. 30. to teach us, that when we bring him to the Temple, we must allow him his Godhead, in which betwixt Him and his Father there is no Distinction. Of All the Absurdities which the Rejection of Christ's Divinity involves Men in, there is none so Great as Theirs, who deny him to be God, and yet allow him to be worship'd; would have us build a Temple to a Man, and involve our selves in the Idolatry which Christ came to abolish. You therefore that are Builders of Churches, take Care of the Purity of your Faith, when you bring your Saviour into them: Let your *Hosanna's* be the Confessions of his Divinity, otherwise your Temple can be none of his, nor will he rest in it unless your Hearts be Right in That Article.

2, The *Hosanna* is an Expression of your Joy. It had its first Institution in a Festival, *The Feast of Tabernacles*; wherein the *Jews* celebrated their Deliverance from the Tabernacles of the Wilderness to their Houses in *Canaan*. From hence it was taken into the Feast of the Dedication, to celebrate God's Deliverance from His Tabernacle also in the Wilderness to his Temple at *Jerusalem*. In both Cases there was a Mighty Subject of Joy: But in the Latter, so much the Greater, by how much it is of more Importance to have God well placed than our selves. The Feast of Tabernacles is a Grand Rejoycing to them that look no further than Houses to Eat and to Drink in; but to Them that value the Church of God, the Solemnity of Dedication is the Only Gladness. To This therefore was the *Hosanna* carried by the Pious Worshippers among the *Jews*, and most Justly continued by All of That Character among Christians. When Christ came from

from his Desarts to his Temples, from his Prisons under *Diocletian*, to his Churches under *Constantine*, how Happy was the Change, how Chearful was the Sight of it? To reflect upon the Sumptuous Structures of those Times, the Magnificent Dedications of them, the Memorials wherewith they were Celebrated, 'tis enough to Extort *Hosanna's* even at Our Distance from them, as bringing back to our Eyes the Festivity which waited upon Christ's Person, and conveyed him to his Temple.

In This Prospect methinks I know not how to blame That Piety of our Ancestors, whereby Every Church had its Anniversary; for it was certainly a Commemoration of the Greatest Blessing that could come to a People. There might be some Abuses of such Festivals, the Joy was Great, and might Degenerate into Luxury, but the Reason of them was Good, and there were good Laws made about them, that they might be both Solemnly and Orderly kept in All Parishes, in Remembrance of That Happy Day wherein Christ came among them, and His Religion and Worship begun their Celebrations.

But if the Remembrance of a Dedication be so Joyful, what must be the Dedication it self? How Exceedingly ought You to rejoyce This Day before God, not only for the Church which your Ancestors built, a Memorial of Ancient, but small Beginnings, but for This which your selves have built, a Monument of your Present and Growing Improvements. That God has given you Ability and More than that, Hearts to go through with it. That he has Blessed you in so great an Undertaking. That your Eyes have seen their Desire, have seen it finish'd. With what Thanksgiving may you come now into his Gates, with what Praise into his Court be Thankful to him and speak Good of his Name.

3dly, This *Hosanna* is an Expression of your *Desires*. In Two Respects. 1. In your *Prayers to Christ*; and 2. In your *Good Wishes for him*.

1. It is a *Prayer to Christ*. Seeing him come to you, and believing him to bring your Salvation, you call upon him for it, and summon All about you to Join in the Invocation, *Save now we beseech thee, O Lord*. The First Thing our Saviour declared of the Temple, after his coming to it, was This, That it should be *the House of Prayer*, not to exclude other Offices, but to give a Preeminence to That. He taught daily in the Temple, and God forbid that his Temple should ever want the Sound of his Word: But if the Word that is spoken there from him, be allowed to engross All the Duty of the Place, instead of the Devotion of Disciples, you bring him nothing but the Curiosity of the *Scribes and Pharisees*; who all came about him every Day in the Temple to hear his Discourses, and to see his Miracles, but Despised the Worship that was paid him, and question'd the Authority of All his Actions.

It is a General Offence in our Reformed Churches, that they are so little used for Prayer, or Sacraments, or any thing indeed but Preaching. The Morning and Evening Services, the Stationary Litanies, in how Few Places are they kept up? And in those Places, How little attended? To All Persons of Figure, Baptism, by a strange Mistake in Figure, is carried into Private Houses. The Communion of the Lord's Supper is so entirely neglected by the main Body of our People, that the very Celebration, the very Institution of it, especially as to Prayer, is in a manner Lost: As if in our Churches there were Nothing to consecrate but the Pulpit, as if we were Above the Font, and had not an Altar.

I exhort therefore, that as in your Former House

you were very Exemplary for the Continual Services of Devotion, so in This, which you have now Erected, you would still carry them on: That not only Sermons, but Supplications, Prayers, Intercessions, and Giving of Thanks, that is, Eucharists, be made here, for All Sorts and Conditions of Men, for All Blessings Spiritual and Temporal, by Persons of All Orders, in All the Parts, and Offices of our Excellent Liturgy. That Every Morning your Prayers be set forth in God's Sight as the Incense, and that there be a Lifting up of your Hands for an Evening Sacrifice. That your Children be brought to the *Baptismal Hosanna*, for the Prayers of the Congregation, upon Vows to Christ heard again in the Temple out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings. That your Catechumens be brought to the *Confirmation Hosanna*, for the daily Increase of God's Holy Spirit, until they come unto his Everlasting Kingdom. That your Penitents come with the *Hosanna of their Litanies, Son of David, have Mercy upon us*. That your Communicants come with the *Hosanna of their Passover, Lamb of God, that takest away the Sins of the World, Grant us thy Peace*. Particularly at This Time, that you All come with the Prayer of your *Dedication*, Beseeching Christ to vouchsafe you the Continuance of his Presence which he now begins here, that his Eyes may be open towards This House Day and Night, and that he would hearken unto the Supplications of his Servants and of his People, which they shall make here before him in all their Dangers and Necessities.

2. The other Act of your Desire is in your *Good Wishes for Christ*. These are Necessary to fix up the Sense of the *Hosanna*, which is a Congratulation with a Benediction annex'd to it. Thus the *Psalmist* explains it, *The Lord send now Prosperity,*

have wished you good Luck. The Disciples having paid Christ all the Respect that lay in their Power, even to spread their very Garments in the Way for him, thought it all too little, and therefore Recommend him to God, and to their own better Circumstances for more, *Blessed be He that Cometh in the Name of the Lord.*

'Tis a Noble Atchievement of Piety that you have here rais'd to Christ, all that behold it must bear you Witness, that to your Power you have been Zealous for him; but yet I am perswaded, that how far soever your Performances have gone, your Endeavours and your Desires do go yet further. The Joy of your Dedication, like that of the Temple which our Saviour came to, is not without a Mixture of Concern for whatever may be wanting that a good Mind could wish for. As to the Fabrick indeed your Joy is compleat; they that saw your Former House, can have no Trouble in a Comparison of This with it upon that Account: Yet still there are other Things to be desired, without which it cannot be assured you, that the Glory of this Latter House shall be greater. In Christian Countries the Laws have always provided, That wherever there is a Church, there should be also an Endowment for the Services of Religion according to the Exigencies of the Place: And as with you the Services are Great, so I do not doubt but your Care and your Provision will be Answerable. In the mean time let your *Hosanna* beseech God, who has hitherto prosper'd the Work of your Hands upon you; That he would go on to prosper your handy work; That Christ, who This Day enters into your Temple with Great Honour, yet not without some Humiliation, may by the Blessing of God upon your Endeavours be exalted in it, to All the Compleatments of Glory that his Habitation here below is capable of. That his Word may be Preach'd, his Sacraments Administred, his Sacrifices Offer'd, Himself Worship'd in the Beauty of Holiness.

But neither are your Good Wishes for Christ to rest in his Successes here with you, Extend them to all the Endeavours that have been, or that may be used for the spreading the Faith of Jesus through the whole World ; that he may have Temples to go to, at least wherever we have any Settlements for our selves. Whilst you receive him into your Arms in your own Temple, look upon him as a Salvation prepared before the Face of All People ; and wherever you observe any Hearts tending towards him, give him There your *Hosanna*, that the Word of the Lord may have free Course and be Glorified, even as it is with you.

This Devotion is not only needed afar off, there is too much room for it here at Home. For tho' we live in a Kingdom that makes loud Acclamations to Christ, and a Kingdom abounding too in People and Wealth to make them Good ; yet through the Sacrilege of Some, and the Indevotion of Others, how many Places have we in it that want Churches how many where the Churches have been pulled down ; how many where they are fallen, and daily falling ; how many where none have ever been Built Places the most Populous and Wealthy, and, if Professions might be depended on, Religious too ? how many of these greatest and most flourishing Places of the Kingdom are Private Houses multiplied and adorn'd without All Bounds, and not a House for Christ, or for a Minister to be found in them. how many of These Places are Private Meetings up, fill'd, and justified, not upon the Principles of Conscience, but of Necessity. *The Foxes have Holes and the Birds of the Air have Nests ; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his Head.*

There seems to be risen up among us now Another, and a Better Spirit. Our most Religious Sovereign, and the whole Body of Her Subjects in Pro

liament, have taken into their Thoughts the Building of Churches, have made it an Act of Publick Piety, have made a Precedent of it, in Proportion to the Increase of People in the Royal City; And it is to be hoped, That the same Occasion will produce the same Effect through the whole Kingdom. This is a Fair Beginning of Devotion towards Christ; Give him here your Good Wishes for the Perfecting of it unto the End; Say unto him, *Hosanna*; Good Luck have Thou with thine Honour; Ride on, because of the Word of Truth, of Meekness, and Righteousness, that Glory may dwell in All the Parts of our Land, and be the Joy of our whole Earth.

I have now open'd the Affections implied in This *Hosanna*, Your Faith, your Joy, your Desires. It only remains to be shewn in the Third Place,

III. What *Grounds* it has for them.

I need not speak of These to Excite your Piety, but to Establish it; and to Do it Right, and to Stir up Others by the Example of it, I shall presume upon your Patience for a Few Words, under These Two Heads:

1. Christ's *Expectation* of the *Hosanna*.

2. His *Defence* of it.

1. This *Hosanna* is what Christ *Expects*. It is commonly Alledged against Any thing that may look Great about Him, what Humility he appear'd in whilst he was upon Earth; how Industriously he avoided All Outward Pomp, and consequently how little Need there is to be at any Trouble, or Charge about it. To build Him Stately Churches, and Furnish them with Costly Utensils, and to bring him into them with All this Shew and Greatness, Who hath required This at your Hands?

I wish They who make such Objections would Consider the *Hosanna*. Did Christ Refuse it? Was not his Command at the Bottom of it? Did he not send his Disciples for the Ass he rode upon, saying,

The Lord hath need of him? And was not His Influence upon the Heart of the Owner to Deliver him for the Service? When he was come to the City, Did he creep into a Corner? Did he go but to a Synagogue? Went he not to the Temple? Enter'd he not by the Golden Gate, which open'd to the very Front of it, and was the most Solemn Way for a Procession to it? After he had done in the Temple, and was to begin with his Churches, Did he not again send his Disciples, for the Guest-Chamber, the best Room in the House, that he pitcht upon? Did he chuse a Poor Owner, that had but a Small, and a Mean One for him? Was it not a Large Upper-Room, suitably furnish'd and prepar'd? And did he not again Influence the Heart of the Owner to shew, and to supply it him? and Commanded his Disciples after All, There to make ready for him, as if the Oblation had not been enough without a Dedication too. Why All this Exactness? Does he Despise your Houses? Far from it. Wherever Two or Three of you are gathered together in His Name, tho' it be but for Family-Piety, There he is in the midst of them; But he has his own Houses also, and his Solemnity of Coming to them; To These your *Hosanna's* Belong, and to These therefore must you go with them. I am persuaded there is not an Householder among you but would be as ready to shew him his Guest-Chamber for his Devout Entertainment, as He whom he sent to in *Jerusalem* was for his Eating the Passover. This Large, This Upper-Room, so well Furnish'd, so well Prepar'd, shew the Disposition of your Hearts for such a Piety. But as it is in This Place that All your Hearts have United Themselves to make him a Reception, so it is to This he Enters in a Peculiar Manner; in This he takes up his Resting-Place with you, that your Publick Devotions might Resort hither, and carry home

The Truth is, That Every thing of This kind is lookt upon by Christ according to its Circumstances. To a People Unconverted He will come, tho' they should Refuse him their Houses ; But where there are Believers, He is not too little for a Temple. Where there is a Temple, Built in a Captivity, by a Few People, in a State of Poverty, He will come to it, be it never so mean : But where Numbers and Wealth Enable his Disciples to Enlarge, and to Enrich it, He, as well as They, chuses it rather. He will fill the House of *Zerubbabel* with his Glory ; but He can walk also in *Solomon's* Porch ; for, *Behold a Greater than Solomon is there.* A Church of Boughs was Our First Cathedral, most of our Churches in Those Unsettled Times were of no Better Materials ; The Believers cut down Branches from the Trees, and strawed them in the way ; But All That was only in order to bring him as soon as they could to his Temples, where he knew well enough how to enter into a Building of Hewn Stone, and to set his Feet upon a Marble Pavement. In a word, Such was his Expectation of Provisions to be made for his Temple, that when he came There, the Place where he set himself was over against its Treasury, to observe how the People paid their Gifts into it : And as he applauded the Widow's Mites only because they were The All of her Penury, so he would surely have Censur'd the Donatives of the Rich, if They of their Abundance had not Cast in much. But,

2dly, Christ does not only expect the *Hosanna*, but where there is Occasion He *Defends* it. The Eve before he enter'd into it, the Solemnity was open'd with the Profusion of a Box of Spikenard upon his Feet ; the Sight of which *Judas* could not bear, and would have Blamed the Offerer : But Jesus said, *Let her alone, she hath wrought a Good work on me*, Joh. XII. 7.

The

The next day the Procession began, and the Acclamations went forwards, till they came into the Temple, in the very Mouths of the Children. Then All the Great Men of the Jews took the Allarm, and were fore displeased, *Hearst thou what These say? Master, Rebuke thy Disciples.* But what did Jesus Answer upon This? *Have ye never read, Out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings thou hast perfected Praise? I tell you, If These should hold their Peace, the Stones would immediately cry out,* Luke XIX. 40.

The Force of This Defence is Inexpressible; But so far as I can reach it, 'tis as if he had said, There is such a Necessity of These *Hosanna's* to me, that it is Impossible to keep them in, or to restrain them. If the Disciples should with-hold them; If, instead of being Instructed as they ought in their Duty to their Master, they should be Perverted by Prejudice, or Misguided by Error, to think the *Hosanna* a Superstition, and to Condemn it for Will-worship; All their Pretences could not stop it; The whole Multitude, the Common Sense of Mankind would take it up, and proclaim it.

If the Multitude should be silent, if instead of having their Reason enlightned by their Years, and improved by their Experience, to the Understanding of Christ, and to a Sense of his Worship, Men should be able to get their Reason debauched by Vice, and confounded by False Interests; If they should arrive to account them the Oracles of Reason, which Dictate Scoffs at This *Hosanna*, and make a Jest of its Triumph; They could not all put it out of Countenance, the Praise would be perfected out of the Mouths of Babes and Sucklings. Infant Reason, Pure and Uncorrupted would rise up and sustain it. Human Nature sucks in This Reverence with the Breast, and when one Generation refuses to be Rational about it, brings on the

Next, and recovers Religion by it. But if the Coming Age also should be negligent, if the Weakness of Childhood, if the Giddiness of Youth should carry it also away from This Acclamation, rather than it should not be heard, the very Works of Piety themselves would found it forth. The Bundles of Boughs that the *Jews* carried into the Temple upon the Feast of Dedication, were called *Hosanna's*, to express the Fulness of the Joy, that the very Inanimate Things were affected with it. For which their Rabbins quoted that Scripture, *Then shall All the Trees of the Wood rejoyce before the Lord*. Whatever it be that Devout Worshippers make Use of in the Glorifying of Christ; That very Thing is a *Hosanna*, and Bears its part in it.

And This is what our Saviour refers to when he speaks of the *Stones crying out*: Not *Any* Stones, but the Stones of *the Temple*. These, whether they be Standing in their Order, or whether they be Buried in their Rubbish, have their Voice, either for the Praise, or for the Condemnation of the People that belong to them; and Both ways for the Glory of the God they belong to.

Whilst the Temple was Standing, its Beautiful Gates, its Spacious Courts, its Polished Corners, its Lofty Pinnacles, struck the Beholders with Great Conceptions, both of God, and of his People, without Any other Argument; The very Fabrick was Vocal, 'twas Impossible to look upon it without Calling its Walls *Salvation*, and its Gates *Praise*. Tho' our Saviour had carried his Disciples several Times every Year to the Temple; yet this very Last Time, as if neither They, nor He, had ever seen it before: *Master, say they, Behold what Stones, and what Buildings are here*. On the other hand, it must not be Dissembled what a surprising Answer our Saviour gave them, *Verily I say unto you, there shall not be left one Stone upon another, that*

shall not be thrown down. 'Twas the Word of Truth that spake this, and it must be fulfilled. But what was the Burthen of this Fatal Event? Was it to Silence the *Hosanna* of the Temple? Did it reflect upon the Wisdom of the Builders, or the Zeal of the Worshippers? By no means. But it had its Cry; and it was a strong Cry against the Sins and Indevotion of their Posterity. The Voice was still about the Temple, but the Sound of it was changed, In the People to a *Crucify him*, and In God to a *Depart hence*.

Our Saviour therefore could not have given us a Better Vindication of the *Hosanna* than This, That All the Blessings, and Judgments of God upon a People, do shew themselves in it. Where Churches are a Building, there needs no other Proof of God's Blessing; it shews at once Religion, and Prosperity: But where the Churches of God are either not at all, or in Ruins; it carries Mourning and Desolation in the very Face of it, and with the same Breath proclaims the Impiety of Men, and the Indignation of God.

If you This Day then be Examined of the Grounds of your *Hosanna*, your Temple shall Answer it. Henceforth let no Man trouble you with Words, this Deed of yours shall speak for it self. You have nothing to beware of, but only that the Rest of your Actions do not speak against it; That there be not a Voice of Sins louder than This of your *Hosanna*.

In that Case only the Temple of the Lord will be of no Service to you, nor his Coming to it a Blessing.

But I cannot think of that. You have built a House for Christ, live up to it. You stand in the Front of all the Zeal of God's House in this Kingdom; keep your Place: Be Foremost in the Worship, as you are in the Building. In fine, you have begun the *Hosanna*, and let there be no stop to it, till it be in the Highest.